

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1.-4. (canceled)

5. (previously presented) An axial thrust bearing for axially supporting a rotating shaft of an exhaust gas turbocharger connected to a lubricating oil circuit, the bearing comprising a profiled annular bearing surface which contacts an essentially flat sliding surface, the bearing surface comprising:

an inside circumference and an outside circumference which bound the bearing surface radially;

a plurality of grooves extending radially from the inside circumference to the outside circumference, said grooves being open on the outside circumference;

a plurality of coplanar flat trap surfaces located between respective pairs of adjacent said grooves such that only one of said flat trap surfaces is arranged between each of the respective pairs of adjacent said grooves; and

a plurality of wedge surfaces located between adjacent pairs of respective said grooves such that only one of said wedge surfaces is arranged between each of the respective pairs of adjacent said grooves, each said wedge surface forming a lubricating oil gap which narrows circumferentially toward an adjacent said flat trap surface and which narrows radially toward said outside circumference such that a shear rate includes a circumferential component and a radial component.

6. (previously presented) The axial thrust bearing of claim 5 comprising a floating annular disk, said profiled annular bearing surface being executed on said floating annular disk, said disk being mounted between a bearing comb on the rotating shaft and a sliding surface on a stationary bearing housing.

7. (previously presented) The axial thrust bearing of clam 6 wherein said profiled annular bearing surface is provided on both sides of said annular disk, each said bearing surface contacting an essentially flat sliding surface.

8. (previously presented) The axial thrust bearing of claim 7 wherein at least one said flat sliding surface is stationary with respect to said rotating shaft, said annular disk being designed to rotate around said shaft and with said shaft.

9. (previously presented) The axial thrust bearing of claim 5 wherein said profiled annular bearing surface further comprises a circumferential web on the outside circumference, the circumferential web having a bearing surface which is coplanar with the flat trap surfaces, the circumferential web being interrupted by said grooves.

10. (previously presented) The axial thrust bearing of claim 9 wherein each said groove comprises a channel where the groove passes through the circumferential web, the channel being narrower than a radially inner part of the groove.

11. (currently amended) The axial thrust bearing of claim 5, wherein a radial flow of lubricating oil in the wedge surfaces causes the radial component of the shear rate.